

CORONAVIRUS

Key speaking points

The following information is provided to for use in discussions in workplaces. It is not exhaustive, and companies will need to align these with their own protocols. This document should be used with the FAQs document.

11 March 2020



MINERALS COUNCIL
SOUTH AFRICA

ABOUT THE CORONAVIRUS

- The coronavirus has been declared a global health emergency by the World Health Organization (WHO).
- The coronavirus is a virus, similar to the common cold or flu in many ways. Symptoms can be very mild for some people, but can be far more deadly for others.
- It is important to know that:
 - There is no need to panic.
 - Not everyone who gets the virus becomes very ill.
 - Good personal hygiene can protect you and your family.

SYMPTOMS

- Symptoms can be very mild for some people, but can be far more deadly for others.
- Some people become infected but don't develop any symptoms or feel unwell.
- Most people (about 80%) recover without needing special treatment.
- Around 1 in every 6 people with the virus becomes seriously ill which could be fatal.
- The most common symptoms are:
 - Fever
 - Tiredness
 - Dry cough
 - Difficulty breathing
- Some people may also have aches and pains, a blocked or runny nose, a sore throat or diarrhea.

CAUSES

- The virus is infectious and spreads from people who are infected to others through:
 - The air by coughing and sneezing.
 - Close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands.
 - Touching an object or surface with the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes before washing your hands.

PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

- The best way to protect yourself is to regularly wash your hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Other preventative measures include:
 - Avoiding close contact with anyone who has fever and cough. Avoid close contact with other people if you are coughing or have a fever.
 - Covering your mouth and nose with your elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze.
 - Only eating well-cooked food, especially meat and eggs.
 - Never spitting in public.
 - Don't touch your face, mouth, nose or eyes without washing your hands.
- Know your HIV status and continue with your ARV and TB treatment.

WHO IS AT RISK?

Anyone who comes into contact with the virus can get it, BUT older people and those with underlying medical problems like high blood pressure, heart problems, low immunity or diabetes are more likely to develop serious illness.

DUTY OF CARE

- It is important to consider the wellbeing of others.
- If you think you may have the virus and display symptoms of fever, cough and difficulty breathing, you should:
 - speak to your healthcare practitioner
 - share your recent travel history
 - avoid travel
 - avoid contact with others
 - notify your employer.

For more information

National Institute for Communicable Diseases
Tel: +27 11 386 6400
www.nicd.ac.za